

THE CUP OF COMMUNION WINE.

A Story Illustrating the Danger to Which It Exposes the Weak.

"We had better not discuss it, dear, since it is one of the comparatively few questions upon which we are not likely ever to agree," and with a very patient, superior sort of smile the Rev. Arthur Hallam stretched his slippered feet upon the warm hearth and took another sip of his smoking toddy.

"I know you can take or let it alone, pursued his wife, "and as long as you do not offer it to our boy I shall not complain. But, oh, I should like to see it banished from the table of the Lord! It is the 'cup of devils' to me, and it cannot be right to use it at that sacred feast."

"That is not for you or me to judge," he returned loftily. "We must observe the holy ordinance according to its institution."

"What came over you, Mary, to stir up that old total abstinence question again?" Mr. Hallam asked lightly as they prepared for rest some three or four hours later.

"Oh, just a little talk I had with Mrs. Sorley. She says her John is quite himself again—hasn't tasted liquor for four weeks, and she is so happy over it."

"Yes, yes; that's all right for a fellow like him who can't taste a drop without wanting a hogshead."

"But, Arthur, he's going to the communion table tomorrow."

"The miserable sot! He is not fit."

"As sure as he smells or tastes the wine he will be gone again, and his wife's heart will be broken."

"Mary, you are a perfect fanatic. Please say no more, my dear, or I shall be exceedingly annoyed with you."

Not many blocks away the object of her anxiety knelt with his wife and children in family prayer, pouring out his heart to God for help to lead a new and a better life.

Morning service saw them all in their places, poorly clad, but neat and whole. In due time John and Susan Sorley passed up the aisle, and close behind them, her sympathetic heart wrung in an agony of prayer, moved the pastor's wife.

Alas, she was right. John Sorley tasted and drained the cup to its dregs. Mr. Hallam's face took on a look of infinite disgust; his wife thrust her soft hand into that of the inebriate with a gentle, sympathetic pressure. Susan Sorley bowed her head upon the altar rails with an exceeding bitter cry; John, afire through every particle of his alcoholized body, rose from his knees and strode like a madman from the church.

The children, scattered through the churchyard, awaited the conclusion of the service. Sorley rushed home alone, through the house to the topmost story, where, locking himself into an empty room, he flung the key into the branches of an elm 40 feet away.

In sore distress, all day and through the long, long night his wife and friends sought him. With a shudder he heard them plan to drag the pond. So still was he that his hiding place was not suspected; none dreamed of his refuge in the unused attic. All day he lay, face downward, upon the boards, fighting out his desperate battle alone with God.

"My toddy, Mary, please," said Mr. Hallam. "I have had a most trying day. It is very sad about that poor wretch, of course, but really he is

scarcely worth all the worry he has cost. Certainly his wife and family would do better without him."

But the "poor wretch" conquered by the grace of God, and in the still morning, while the little birds called to their mates, he spoke his wife's name. The ear of love is keen; she was outside the door immediately. "Susan," he said, "I am safe—I am here."

"Thank God," she said and sank upon the floor weeping. "Oh, John, such a night of agony!"

"Forgive me, long suffering wife, but I dared not stir. I have been lying still in the hand of God, and he has kept me safe till the demon passed."

Neither of them ever bowed again at the table of their Lord, and if at times their disregard of the command, "This do in remembrance of me," caused them some unhappiness, they could but humbly plead, "Lord, thou knowest all things," and leave the case with him.

The day came when the Rev. Arthur Hallam distributed the elements with a shaking hand, when, instead of one glass of toddy, he needed two and three and four. Then he realized, in his own bitter experience, the brotherhood of man.—Union Signal.

Tendencies of the Liquor Traffic.

Most of the fearful amount of crime, unrest and depression can be very easily traced to the criminal tendencies of this traffic, and the enormous consumption of the wages of labor, resulting in poverty and the exhaustion of the resources of the people that this traffic occasions, is not less than one thousand millions of dollars! A safe and recent estimate gives this as the amount spent directly for alcoholic liquors, and another thousand millions are expended to take care of its awful consequences.—Selected.

It Is a Flood of Rum That Now Threatens.

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking * * * and knew not until the flood came and took them all away." These words most clearly affirm that the people in those remote days had sunk into such depths of sottishness and gluttony that not only were they incapable of any attempt at self preservation when the great flood came, but they were too drunk to know even that they were about to be drowned.—Axel Gustafson.

The Mainspring of Evil.

Dr. Richardson styles moderate drinking "the moral mainspring of the whole organization of drunkenness and of all the crimes that result from it," and Dr. Richardson is right.

When in April, 1893, George W. Childs changed the form of The Public Ledger, doubling it across the middle, at the same time adding more pages, he made this announcement among others: "The publisher and editor of The Ledger means that it shall be in touch with the most sentient, progressive spirit of the age as that spirit makes itself manifest in all departments of human energy, in religion, science, politics, art, literature, industry, amusement." Mr. George W. Childs Drexel, when he succeeded Childs as editor as well as publisher of The Ledger, announced his intention of still keeping that sentiment flying to the fore in the paper. But Mr. Drexel will never be before the public so prominently as G. W. Childs was. He is a smooth faced, neatly dressed man, so quiet and domestic in his habits that he rarely goes away from home of an evening.

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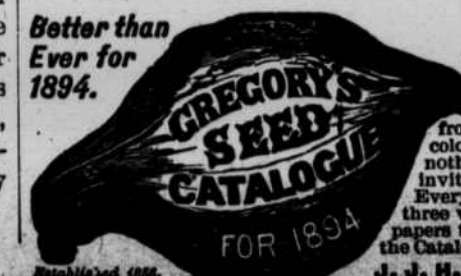
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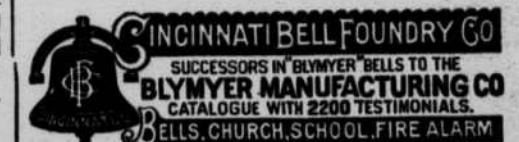
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